

# PHYSIOGNOMY;

Being a SKETCH only

Of a larger WORK upon the same PLAN:

Wherein the different

TEMPERS, PASSIONS, and MANNERS of Men,  
Will be particularly considered.

Hear you! whose *graver* heads in equal scales  
I weigh, to see whose *heaviness* prevails;  
Attend the trial I propose to make.

DUNCIAD.

By the EDITOR of the  
History and Antiquities of WHEATFIELD in SUFFOLK.



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T O

WILLIAM HOGARTH, Esquire.

S I R,

THE Author begs Leave, with the greatest Respect, to put the following Performance into your Hands; some Parts of which, he flatters himself, may amuse you, and the dull-est, he hopes, will at least lull you to Rest: A favourable Circumstance that attends but few Pamphlets. For, how many have we in the Compass of a Year, that, like the Clickings of a Spider behind the Wainscot, neither keep us quite awake, nor let us sleep sound?

His Pretensions, which must also be his Apology, for taking this Liberty, he derives from the Nature of his Subject: For (tho' at an immense Distance in the Execution) he fancies he bears some Kind of Relation to you in his Design; which is to ridicule those Characters, that more serious Admonitions cannot amend.

How happy You are in your Pourtraits of FOLLY, all, but the Subjects of them, confess; and your more *moral* Pieces, none, but the abandoned, disapprove. We cannot perhaps point to the very Man or Woman, who have been saved from Ruin by them, yet we may fairly conclude, from their general Tendency, many have: For such cautionary Exhibitions correct, without the Harshness of Reproof, and are felt and remembered, when rigid Dogmatizings are rejected and forgotten.

*Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.—*

YOUR HARLOT'S and RAKE'S *Progress* strike the Mind with Horror and Detestation! Every Scene, but the first of Innocence, is an alarming Representation of the fatal Consequences of Im-



morality and Profuseness! You very justly give them not a Moment of rational and true Enjoyment. And herein you excell the very ingenious Author of the BEGGAR'S OPERA, who suffers his profligate Crew to be happy *too long*, and takes them off at last, without leaving *sufficient* Abhorrence behind, among the Spectators.

Your yet more serious Pieces are elevated and sublimed into a Beauty of Holiness, fit for the sacred Places of their Destination.

Your Pieces of mere Amusement are so natural and striking, that a Man cannot look at them without fancying himself one of the Company; he forgets they are Pictures, and rushes into their Diversions as in real Life.

In Truth, SIR, you have found out the Philosopher's wished for Key to every Man's Breast; or you have, by some Means or other, found a Way to break open the Lock. ZOPYRUS could hit off (if it was his own Sagacity) a Failing or two in a Modest Philosopher, who was ready to confess before he was accused; but You have brought to publick View the lurking Wickedness of Man's Heart, intrenched in Hardiness and Obstinacy, and involved in the sanctimonious Veil of studied, and deep-covered Hypocrisy.

While you, SIR, live, which the Author hopes will be many Years, he thinks to postpone the Commencement of his Scheme of *weighing Mens Understandings, Passions, &c.* for no Man would slowly trace out by a Mechanical *Apparatus*, what You can instantaneously discover by Intuition.

The Author begs to be considered as one of your many, many Thousand Admirers, and to subscribe himself, SIR, your *devoted*,

And *most obedient*

*Humble Servant.*





# PHYSIOGNOMY.

*PHYSIOGNOMY*, as it was practised by the Ancients, was founded on careful observations upon the complexion, lines, and shape of the body in general, compared with the manners, tempers, and understandings of men: but custom, which oftentimes dispenses with Etymological propriety, has now confined it to the lineaments of the face only; and has taken so large a stride as to make *Phys* and Countenance the same thing; and *index animi vultus* is in every man's mouth.

The most famous in this science were the *Egyptians*; owing probably, not so much to their unquenchable thirst after knowledge, as to the formation and constitution of their language; which, consisting of the representations and figures of animals, (*primi per figuras animalium Ægyptii sensus mentis affingebant*, says *Tacitus*) instead of letters, obliged them to trace minutely the nature and properties of each, before they could express their ideas by them; and this necessity brought on a habit of enquiry, which led them to their observations on human beings.

There are innumerable instances of their sagacity upon record; but the greatest is the well known story of the *Physiognomist* who came to *Athens* in the time of *Socrates* to exhibit his art; for, being asked the disposition of that great Philosopher, he pronounced him a passionate, sour fellow; which *Socrates* himself allowed to be true, before he conquered his natural temper.

*Dante's*



*Dante's* Characters, in his view of Purgatory, are founded on the same principles; and *Shakespear* makes *Cæsar* regard the larger lines of it, when he remarks upon *Cassius's* "lean hungry look," and wishes him "fatter."

The modern pretenders to this Science have brought it into disrepute, particularly the *Gypsies*, by confining it to lewd prognosticks of love, and by joining *Palmistry*, or the art of picking pockets to it. The first appearance of these vagabonds was in *Germany*, tho' they claim their descent from *Egypt*; and their subfusk complexions were probably acquired by greasy unguents and fuliginous mixtures dried in by the sun; which have been carried on through many successions by generation; so that for aught we know, the first *Negro*, about whose colour *sub judice lis est*, might be a Chimney-sweeper with his foot washed in.

But tho' this Science in its genuine sense be lost, or not properly cultivated in *England*, it is certain that to this day we unwittingly make use of many of the terms of it: we familiarly talk of men of *Gravity*, and men of *Levity*, of *open* and *reserved* countenances, without considering that we then speak in the character of *Physiognomists*; for, neither *Gravity*, nor *Levity*, *Openness*, nor *Reservedness*, in their primary meaning, imply any particular make or arrangement of features. Terms of art are dangerous things for those to meddle with, who know not the art they belong to, and generally lead men into errors and absurdities: to this ignorance is owing the gross misapplication of the term *Gravity*; which, according to the laws of *Physiognomy*, means *heaviness*; yet, because the God-like countenance of a studious, thoughtful, meditating man, is at the time fixed and unmoved, the insensible face of a grave (dull) one, claims, and possesses, from that circumstance, an equal rank with him.—The *Lion* is a most noble creature, and every beast of the field would be glad to be like him; but we read of none but the *Ass* that ever attempted to be taken for him.



The *Greeks*, who studied this science under the *Egyptians*, were exceedingly careful not to confound *Minerva* and her Owl together, and constantly distinguish in their language the serious, venerable man, from the grave, heavy man. The *Latins* have guarded the term from all possible misapprehension. *Virgil* says, *pietate gravem ac meritis—viri*; and it is said somewhere of *Pomponius Atticus*, that his *comitas non sine severitate erat, neque gravitas sine facilitate*; which nearly answer to the *Ἀστειότης* and *Σεμνότης* of the *Greeks*.

But, after all, as scrupulously exact as these Distinctions may be, I cannot forbear questioning the general soundness of the science itself. In some glaring instances indeed, the Professors of it may, and so may every *abnormis sapiens* judge right; but in the main, so many circumstances must concur, that, at best, it is very precarious.—If we consider the object of *Physiognomy*, that cannot always be in the same state; for, granting that every line in the body has a correspondent line in the mind (if I may so speak) yet outward accidents may disturb the disposition of the one, without affecting the other. So likewise the passions may disturb the internal lines without giving any external marks of it.—If we consider the Artist, he cannot always be in a fit disposition to make his observations; for, his skill depends upon his seeing and feeling, accompanied with a certain happy sagacity arising from both; but if either of these senses fails, the art fails also. The Poet says, “All seem yellow to the jaundic’d eye;” and the faculty allows that the fevered hand will often mistake the patient’s pulse.

It may then be asked, how came this art ever into reputation? I answer, by the same means that Urinal Quacks and Conjurers have had a run here in this kingdom; by a difficulty of access and a parade of hard words; and by giving time to their *Zanies* to pump out the secrets of the vulgar: thus furnished with a pre-

vious knowledge of their several cases, they enter upon their office with the certainty of *Sir George Trueman* in the *Drummer*, or the *Haunted House*, when, in the disguise of a conjurer, he is consulted by his servants. By some such secret intelligence, in all probability, the disposition of *Socrates* was discovered to *Zopyrus*: he worked by the assistance of some servant, or perhaps an idle scholar of the Philosopher's, who watched the good old man in an unguarded hour, and then betrayed him.—Sometimes intelligence is picked up from the votaries themselves; who, under the influence of prepossession or sudden astonishment, gape out their own secrets, and then impute the discovery to the superior abilities of the Practitioners. Upon these sandy and fallacious foundations stands the science of *Physiognomy*.

But as all forgeries and counterfeits take their first rise from realities, or the supposed want of them; so this art implies there being such a power in nature, or that such a power would be useful to mankind. And, indeed, the utility of the thing itself is a good presumptive proof of its existing somewhere; because to none, but atheistical and narrow-minded men, are there any deficiencies, or *desiderata* in nature. The difficulty is to trace it out with that precision and exactness, as will exclude all conjecture or surmise; for nothing can be more arbitrary than determinations founded upon mere imagination, because it has not one property that can absolutely be depended upon. To remedy this evil, I shall endeavour to put this science into a different channel, still retaining the name, and by a course of *statical* experiments to reduce it to a system that cannot be controverted; thereby striking off the artful and lucrative decisions of some, the uncandid Prognosticks of others, and the common errors and absurdities of all who pretend to *Physiognomy*. At the same time, I would not be thought to bear any malevolence at the Professors themselves, by thus questioning the certainty of their principles; on the contrary, (as they are fit for nothing else) I wish them all  
places



places in this new system; some as *Planets* of the first magnitude, others as *satellites*, and so down to the fourth house; as commissioners, collectors, supervisors, and petty-officers; and I promise, that if I have the appointment of their salaries, they that do most, shall be best paid.

When I call this a *new* System of *Physiognomy*, I would be understood in the same sense that we call this or that a *new* fashion, when it is really a revival or improvement of an old one; (*Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere*—) because, from some classical expressions, I am apt to think the Ancients, tho' too much, did not always go upon conjecture: for, when they talk of *plumbeum ingenium*, *asinus*, *plumbeus*, *gravastellus*, &c. &c. what can we think but that they weighed men's heads against these heavy bodies, and thence denominated and classed them in their several departments?—The ambiguous use of the word *Trutina* also favours this supposition; for we read of putting men, writings, virtues and vices, as well as beef and mutton, into it. Add to these the term *Gravity*, which has certainly a Philosophic cast in it, and we can scarce doubt of its being taken from some System of *Statics*.

But, tho' many passages in ancient authors thus lead us think they had, in some cases, better guides than mere conjecture, yet it is certain their process or course of experiments is entirely lost to us; we have no Idea of it: For, granting the head to be the Palace of noble understandings, the Seat of private Gentlemen's, and the Cottage of vulgar, how shall we come at a certain knowledge of it's furniture? We cannot weigh it separately from the body, because, as *Seignior Vigani* complained over his *Succedaneum*, when dissecting a living Grey-hound, *præ iniquitate temporum non licet vivos homines dissequare*; and if we cannot weigh it alive, it answers no purpose to weigh it at all; because the lifeless clod of the *bel-Esprit*, and the *Esprit grossier*, may be of equal gravity; for it is a certain fine vital Flame that makes all the difference between the wit and the fool.—“Alas! poor Yorick.”

B

“ —Where



“ —Where be your Gibes now? your Gambols? your Songs?  
 “ your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in  
 “ a roar? not one to mock your own grinning? quite chap-  
 “ fallen!”-----From this posthumous equality the *Heathen* mo-  
 ralists take frequent occasion to mortify the pride of human great-  
 ness, as *Lucian* does that of female beauty by ridiculing the scalp-  
 less musty skull of the famous *Helen*. *Shakespeare* carries the  
 mortification farther in the following reflection of *Hamlet*. “ To  
 “ what base uses may we return! Why may not imagination  
 “ trace the noble dust of *Alexander* till he find it stopping a  
 “ bung-hole?”

“ Imperial *Cæsar* dead, and turn’d to clay,  
 “ Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.”

As then I can have no assistance from Antiquity, nor from any anatomical Experiments, but must make my own way through obsoleteness and obscurity, I hope to be indulged the common privilege of bewildered travellers, to beg as I go along; to beg, not to shew me the way, nor for alms, or old cloaths, but for some terms of art, which may be lent me without any injury to the Artists themselves, and yet may facilitate my journey thro’ shadows, clouds, and darkness: And I shall stop at the doors of the writers upon *Hydrostaticks* to relieve me with some of theirs; which I will endeavour to apply, with as little variation from their primary meaning as I can; but if my subject will not, in all points, submit to strict and exact conformity, I hope for their excuse: The man that lends me a great coat to put on in bad weather, is no ways injured, nor is his favour made less, if I only hang it loose about my shoulders.

I shall first speak of *specific Gravity*; though this is so little appropriate in truly grave Men, that it is difficult to distinguish it from the specific Gravity of an Ass; there is the same stupidity, the same lumpishness, the same *deorsum* tendency in the one as  
 in



in the other; they agree indeed so much *in eodem termino* that their specificality is swallowed up in their general likeness: We must have recourse therefore to their primary qualities, and distinguish them by their most specific difference, which is, That one goes upon *two* legs and the other upon *four*. Philosophical men, perhaps, will be offended at this untechnical account of specific Gravity; but I must desire them to consider the difficulty of coming at a more certain knowledge of it; for, though they, rather than fail of an Experiment, will contentedly be the subject of it themselves, it is not so easy to persuade other men to throw themselves into a river to be weighed *Hydrostatically*; and, in truth, if I could find a man grave enough to submit, I should fear his Gravity would not suffer him to rise again. But Chance, who has been a great Philosopher in all ages, has happily furnished me with an Experiment.—A grave old man and his ass attempting to pass a rivulet in a flood, the stream was too quick and rapid for the sluggish animal, and carried him and his rider into the deep: The whirling of the water, and fear of drowning, soon parted this congenial pair; and each of them, regardless of the other, tried to get to land. Their Struggling at first overcame their Gravity, but at length, after much toil and many fruitless efforts, they submitted; and quietly drove down the current. At this time, it was observed, that their heads were both under water, but that the tips of their ears just pricked up above it; their backs were covered, but ever and anon a certain part of both would emerge and peep above water; and had it not been for the sport of winds, the experiment had been correctly made; however enough was seen to shew that their Gravity was very nearly, if not exactly the same.

By *relative* or *partial Gravity*, I mean that degree of heaviness which one body has when compared with another of the same species; which definition supposes, and I am afraid it must be granted, that there is Gravity in all men. When the *Regulus*,



as the *Chymist* speaks, is taken away, some *caput mortuum* will be found at the bottom.—— By *absolute Gravity*, a certain centripetal force, a precipitate descent to the lower regions; for, whoever is, “with all the might of Gravitation blest,” and has as *Sir John Falstaff*’s “alacrity in sinking,” will instantly preponderate, and his head fall down as in an exhausted Receiver.

To come at the weight of mens heads with an exactness that enables me to range them under this proposed order, I have contrived a *Steel-zone* or girdle to go round their waistes, and a *Load-stone* to take them up and suspend them in the air, as *Mahomet*’s tomb was once believed to hang at *Medina*: for I find that men thus trussed up, and unable to turn the scale by any foreign matter, must fall into their several and respective departments of Gravity: let them squirm about as much as they will, and struggle to support their heads from sinking, they can no more keep them up, than a witch can keep her’s down, when she is tried by water *Ordeal*. It is with the rational, as with the material world; mens understandings subside according to the laws of Gravitation; that which is heaviest sinks lowest; that which is less heavy sinks next, and so on in their several courses, till we come to almost absolute Levity.

As this is entirely a new-invented Engine, it may be necessary to give some instructions in what manner to put it up: now, if we may trust to *Atomic* and *Atheistic* Philosophers, to your *τοπᾶν* and *anima mundi* Gentry, it will fix itself up; no first cause is wanting, every thing is its own cause; but my advice is, not to depend too much upon such ingenious refinements, but upon plain Carpenters principles, to put out a beam from the loft of some house, and near the end of it fix the Load-stone by a pulley; then sink or raise it ’till you find the true sphere of it’s attraction. The following plate may make it more intelligible to the reader, where all the figures are supposed to have been weighed by the Load-stone’s taking them up separately by their Girdles,  
and





A. absolute Gravity. B. Conatus against absolute Gravity. C. partial Gravity. D. comparative Gravity E. horizontal, or good Sense. F. Wit. G. comparative Levity, or Coxcomb. H. partial Levity, or pert Fool. I. absolute Levity, or Stark Fool.







and to have fallen into the directions they are placed, according to their different Gravities.

I shall exemplify the operation and use of this *Apparatus*, after first premising, that, when any comes *voluntarily* to be weighed, he must be carefully searched that he has no lead in his shoes, or about any ballancing part of his body; as Jockies are weighed at *New-market*, *on* and *off*.—That none be weighed, but when they are perfectly sober; because some sorts of liquors, as some sorts of fevers, are apt to make men light-headed; I except morning drinkers; for, as they are not at all elevated by their beer, they may be weighed at any time.—That Books divided into Columns be kept, and every one's name entered according to his weight under proper heads.—That the offices be open every day in the week, Sundays and Holidays excepted, from ten to one, and from three to six; and that every body have the liberty of copying his neighbour's understanding for the small price of sixpence.—N. B. As there is no room to distinguish between *occasional* and absolute Gravity, I advise men not to suffer themselves to be weighed immediately after lying in bed too long in a morning; a full meal, or a nap in an elbow chair; after five hours at cards, or two hearing a *Methodist* Preacher, or indeed any Preacher, &c. &c.

I am very sensible that great opposition will be made to this my Scheme, because I know the danger of attacking, or even rectifying any established System; and especially one that has been thought so infallible, that the sentences of *Ostracism* and death have been pronounced upon it.—The Zealots in this art I would pacify with this Sugar-plumb; that I mean to fight under their banner, and not to overturn, but corroborate their Systems; for, *abundans cautela non nocet* is a maxim in *Westminster Hall*; and I don't think that saving advice of *Cicero*, as great a man as he was, *neve major cura et opera suscipiatur quam causa postulet*, should be regarded in this case, whatever it might be in the *Roman Senate*.

But



But if this will not sweeten their tempers, and they reject me as an auxiliary, I claim the Privilege of being angry too, and make no scruple to assert, it is a dangerous and wicked art in their hands. They may, by way of revenge, find out the lines of my face, and make what conclusions they please from them; we have no executions, or banishments in this happy Island, upon such slender evidence; tho' the total extirpation of them was reserved to grace the annals of GEORGE the Second, in whose happy reign the statute against Wizards and Witches was repealed.

*Fronti nulla fides* is an *Adage* of very long standing, and it's verity is as great as it's antiquity; which circumstance reflects much discredit upon the *extempore* sentences of *Physiognomists*; it is a fallacious way of judging, and must not be too much encouraged nor relied upon; for, unless we could tell how the temperament and muscles of the face act upon the mind, and *vice versa*, which the *Metaphysicians* have not explained to us, the present doctrine of *Physiognomy* is of a piece with *astrologocal* and *Rosicrusian* absurdities: *P. Malebranche*, in his *Recherche de la verite*, says, that, "Material things cannot unite themselves to our  
"souls, because matter is extended, and the soul is not extended," which is point blank against it: tho', with submission, his argument is rather taken from a Taylor's shop, than out of a school of Philosophers; for, the first would argue for the necessity of two selvages before he can make a seam; but a Philosopher may readily conceive an union of two substances without a needle and thread. Regardless therefore of *Thales Milesius*, *Artemidorus*, *Anaximander*, *Adamantus* the Sophist, and *Aristotle* among the Ancients; *Baptista Porta*, and our countryman *Robert Fludd* among the Moderns; or of my worthy cotemporaries the *Gypsies* and Fortune-tellers among the Hedges; I will confine myself to the experiments I have made with a small hand engine of my own inventing, (a model of the plan already laid down) and the observations I made afterwards upon the understandings of the men  
I weighed



I weighed with it: should any errors be discovered when compared with one of a larger scale, be it remembered that watches seldom go so true as clocks.

In the three learned Professions we generally expect to find Gravity, and in truth we are seldom disappointed; but it is by no means peculiar to any one of them; and oftentimes that seriousness, which becomes them in office, is mistaken for it: but it may always be known by adhering to the man when the professor is no more; for he that cannot pull off his face with his robe or his gown, has genuine absolute Gravity in him. Few men are born with that cast of countenance, which they must afterwards wear upon the stage of this world, and therefore with their brother Players take the *Larva* or mask to personate their characters in; but nothing but absolute Gravity can induce them to keep it on, when the Play of the Day is over. For what can be more ridiculous than for men to call for their wine, their candles, or their coals, in the language of the schools, the bar, or *Warwick Lane*, when retired from those scenes of business and importance? I do not mean that “noisy mirth and mid-night revelry” should succeed, but a certain *comitas* or facility, that levels a man to a familiarity with his friends in a free and easy conversation.

(A) *Absolute Gravity* is slow, solemn and cautious, keeping close in shore, as well knowing the dangers of the deep; talks of trifles with importance, and says nothing that can be contradicted; nods and shrugs when Ideas are all out, and artfully affects a silence 'till the sluggish animal spirits bring in a few more. It's gait is stiff and formal, as walking in an undertaker's procession, or, as *Horace* says, *velut qui Junonis sacra ferret*; stops sometimes short as full of thought, but really for want of it, and pretends to put on a forgetfulness that is truly unavoidable. A face unsentimental, an eye unobserving, unchangeableness of countenance, and immoveableness of features, with a stand off, *procul, O procul este, Profani!* distinguish these men of weight,



without importance, these stupid half-burnt lumps of clay.—Now, tho' it is impossible to envy, or wish to be one of this number, yet I must own few men pass through the world more quietly, or meet with more negative respect than they do; for, being furnished with but few Ideas, as they have not the pleasure, so they have not the pain of thinking; nor, for the same reason, can they ever offend with a *Bon mot*, or smart expression; and luckily for them, this very incapacity is considered as a kind of voluntary reserve, from a point of good-breeding, or deference to their superiors; for, the world is *Cartesian* still, and goes upon a *plenum* when it judges of grave heads. Another circumstance in favor of absolute Gravity, is it's likeness to attention; which is a more endearing recommendation to most companies, and especially to great talkers; for, silent flattery exceeds noisy adulation, as admiration excels babbling praise, and steals to the heart under the disguise of natural and unavoidable approbation: but this is Gravity in it's calm estate.

*Interdum tamen et vocem tollit—iratusque* GRAVIS *tumido delitigat ore*, and then, as from a fire made of green wood, we have nothing but crackling, sputtering, and smoke; *Magnus sine viribus ignis—incaustum furit---* Grave men, like all other heavy bodies, when once disturbed and put in motion, have an equal aversion from rest.—*Si discordia vexet inertes*, they bounce and fly; for anger is a kind of yeast in lumpish constitutions, that ferments, and gives a frothy, fretting volatility to the sluggish matter.

So have I seen the dumplin fair and plump,  
 (Which *Ann* our cook-maid makes for sweet-heart *John*)  
 Start on a sudden from the dark Abyss,  
 And skud upon the surface; but the fire  
 By saving hands once damp'd, and near put out,  
 This vain Pretender to a loftier Region  
 Precipitately falls, and sinks down-right.

ANON.



I have often attended to these men in their rage, expecting that the fallies of passion might work out something, tho' of a freakish kind of liveliness; but the utmost I could ever yet discover never rose above the *Laconic* intermination of *Neptune* to the winds, *Quos ego*—A ferociousness of features, a staring wildness will break forth; but lead, hot or cold, melted or unmelted, is lead still, and will preponderate.

(B) When I see a painful and strangling *conatus* to emerge from absolute Gravity, I cannot help pitying the man, well knowing it is insuperable; and yet, I think, I have sometimes discovered, tho' no difference in the weight, something lighter in his pursuits; which I cannot account for, unless some irregular flux of the animal spirits occasions it. But the difference is so small, that it is impossible to distinguish him by any personal marks from absolute Gravity. If a Divine, he does not read the Schoolmen, but he takes in weekly a sheet or two of one or other of the Histories of the Holy Bible, hackneyed out by the News-hawkers to all parts of this kingdom. If a Lawyer, he does not begin *ab ovo* of the law, but he certainly takes into a dark age or two of it. If a Physician, tho' he does not read the Empyrick *Paracelsus*, yet he will study *Salmon's* works, and get by heart the twenty-four good properties of an old nurse by Dr. *Fuller*. If he has no particular employment, he weaves nets, or cuts up walking-sticks, and carves Eagles and Ducks heads to them; if crooked, the beaks are ready made, and there is nothing wanting to compleat the works of his ingenuity but ink or black beads to make eyes with. If his circumstances require labour, he will not thresh, but he will serve the Masons, or draw straws for a Thatcher; he will not work in the mines, but he will sweat in smelting the ore; he will not roll barrels, but he will make them; and if not drudge for oysters, have a hand in packing them up; to be sure not spirit to eat them.

(C) The next Figure is less grave, but confused and in great disorder. Such men have many of the rough tools which our understanding

understandings sometimes make use of, but none of the finer and finishing kind, which are necessary for perfecting a work. They can hew out the scantlings of a Fabrick, but not put them together; they can saw, but not plane; they can forge, but not polish: They write coarsely, incoherently and absurdly: They roar, not talk; they are bulls, not companions. In religion they are frantick and cruel; in politicks positive, hot and noisy; “change fides and still confute.” In publick conversations, rude and abusive; in *tete a tete*’s, back-biting and slanderous.—But as vociferous as these men generally are in conversation, they can, upon occasion, be as mute and reserved; for I never could see, but that they who throw dirt, will sometimes lick it; they will kick, and kiss in the same breath; and Bullies will not scruple to turn Pimps. The *Thraſonic* and *Gnathonic* govern by turns; and he, “whose very look’s an oath” to-day, will be a fawning sycophant to-morrow.

Crawling in this line, I generally find hopeless Infidelity; for, tho’ that noble Science, to speak in the phrase of prize-fighters, who are great admirers of it, is some how taken for a mark of quick discernment, and superiority of genius, when it does not proceed from a bad heart, it really springs from a grave and puzzling head. The wholesale merchants in this commodity, are tolerably correct in their bills of parcels, and seldom err in the accounts of the places they fetch them from; but then the commodities themselves are of so wretched a quality, like silk and cotton fretting one another, so cold and comfortless in their application and use, that none but poor, confused, and perplexed understandings will have any concerns with them. But the small dealers and little retailers of infidelity are still worse; for they seldom know even from whence their goods come: sometimes they will present you with a piece of stuff wrought up by the scholars in the *Old Academy*, which was really begun and finished in the new; sometimes in the *New Academy* what was woven in the old; and both calculated for very different purposes.

They



They blunder likewise in the dates of their goods; some, as made since the *Christian Æra*, which were worn on another occasion, and out of fashion long before; others, as before that time, (which is absurd) that were invented and worn but a few centuries ago; and some of them even in the present: But all of a texture so lax, coarse, and flimsy, as would hardly catch a fly for a spider's supper. And yet these vile goods fringed with the appearance of learning, like the *Phylacteries* of the *Pharisees* with words of sanctity, are bought up by weak and ignorant people.--Man, foolish man! how fond art thou of novelty! A Rabbit-woman, a Bottle-conjurer, and a Ghost, a Dwarf, a Giant, and the *atrabilaire* Blasphemer, are equally captivating exhibitions for thy silly wonder!--In truth, a mongrel understanding will always be meddling and doing mischief; absolute Gravity never stirs out of its place, but, like the weight of a parish clock, keeps punctually to its perpendicular; a *conatus* against absolute Gravity only wriggles a little, as the weight does when the clock is winding up; but partial Gravity has more extent of line, and swings about as the weight striking against the sides of the case; which, if it does not stop the clock, certainly makes it go wrong.

(D) The head in this direction is furnished with abilities well adapted, and fit for the common affairs of life, and as such is justly esteemed; for there are parts in the *Drama* that a *Garrick* will not stoop to, and a — cannot reach; which, if left out, or ill executed, make a vast chasm in the performance. A subordination of understanding, as well as of place, is necessary in states and kingdoms; all must not be prime ministers; every master builder must have labourers under him of different occupations; some to execute what he designs, and others to prepare and fetch materials; and so long as men keep in the character nature designed them for, they are looked upon with respect. But what an inundation of contempt and ridicule breaks in upon them when they depart from it! when carts and waggons, which



are carriages of burthen, usurp the dignity of chariots and coaches, and drive into the *beau monde*! It is my misfortune to know a young man who has been brought up in a reputable way, and has abilities extremely suitable to his calling; but is so unlucky as to think a more elevated style in his discourse raises him proportionably in the opinion of men, and gives him a place among the *literati*. With this view, he has had recourse to an English dictionary upon all occasions, not for the explanation of hard words, but to acquire them; and by changing common for synonymous ones, generally derived from the learned languages, and oftentimes obsolete, he has made himself the jest of his superiors, and wholly unintelligible to his equals; as a taught *Jay* or *Mag-pye* is ridiculous for his mimicry, and at the same time confounds, and even frightens, his brethren in the woods. I weighed this young man before and since he turned pedant, and found he sunk in exact proportion to his imaginary rise, and, if he goes on, will fall down to partial, if not absolute Gravity, unless the Coxcomb catches him up as he sinks, and carries him with him into his own apartment.

(E) But I hasten to the *Horizontal* direction, where I see the sensible, the wise, and the good, all ranged in order, where I have the pleasure to see all my friends smiling upon their cheerful companion. I come now to that golden mediocrity,

Where place me Heaven! and of all thy store  
Of worldly blessings, I will ask no more.

ANON.

Here we find sense without pride, wisdom without art, and goodness without affectation; seriousness without gravity, mirth without levity, and piety without moroseness or severity. No cruelty in Religion, no noise in Politicks, no coarse reflections, no slanderous conversations approach this hallowed place. In short, here dwells every thing that dignifies a human Being.

(F) If



(F) If we ascend the region of *Wit*, we shall be highly entertained; sometimes gathering flowers in the fields of fancy; sometimes struck with the sprightliness and vivacity of *bon-mots*: well-chosen similes, metaphors, allegories, and all the gay attendants upon imagination surround us: It is a new world of pleasure and delight; but it is never so, except when we see it supported by the durable columns of good sense and good manners; when we are assured that no advantage will be taken of our admiration to excite in us indecent and unchaste ideas: For wit is too apt of itself to run riot, and if not moderated and ballanced by some sober and solid principles, will overturn us; and no matter whether we break our necks out of the chariot of the sun, or a stage-coach. Prophaneness and obscenity would be wit from the mouth of a fiend, these may be the characteristics of it in the infernal regions; but here on earth no man has it genuine, who does not preserve decency and order, as many experiments have convinced me.

(G) A *Coxcomb* may be known by a smirking complacency, and placid admiration of himself; by a redundancy of small talk upon common occurrences, and sometimes by *sesquipedalia verba*, and a pomposity of harangue. The same degree of understanding will answer all these purposes; for, tho' the *frigid* and *turgid* may, at first sight, seem opposite qualities, yet they are really no more so than water in the ebb, or at high-tide, are of contrary temperatures: But if any one has falsely associated an idea of vivacity with the *turgid* (to go on with my simile) there is no greater difference than between the water in my spring, and that which boils my meat; for, tho' the latter has an effervescence and aëstusosity in it that looks like spirit, yet it is really nothing but vapid water at the bottom. This is a Coxcomb in his true position.---But sometimes, I am sorry to say it, the figure immediately below will vibrate and swing up to this point; it moves not in a straight line, but in *Zigzag*, as an awkward at-



tempt, and rather against the grain. It hurts one to see a man of genius in this place; but vanity has oftentimes an attractive force that overcomes the best understandings. Sometimes the figure above flutters down to this direction, and the pertness and impertinence of the Fool join issue with the Coxcomb; and then, “bad neighbourhood I ween.” In short, so many different characters disembody themselves into this compound of vanity and affectation, that---*loquacem delassare valent Fabium*.---Suffice it to say, that the proposed *apparatus* will so separate the parts as to give every one its due weight.

(H) The *pert Fool* is a Gnat buzzing in every one's ear, he is at your elbow and your mouth; in your path when you walk, and perches at the back of your chair if you sit down: He hops about a room like a tame *Robin-red-breast*, and picks up the crumbs of conversation. “He is here---He is here---He is gone,” like the Ghost in *Hamlet*; too silly for sport, and too civil to be kicked; below ridicule, insensible of mental, and above manual correction. He thrusts himself into all companies, and is familiar with all ranks of people; shakes hands with his superiors without diffidence, and lolls upon their shoulders without distinction. Regardless of your frowns he talks with you, confident of his *bien venue*, he visits you; if not at home, he waits for your return; if busy, for your leisure; and if sick, to comfort your family: He stays without asking, and takes leave without going. Locks, bars and bolts are no greater security from an impertinent fool, than from flies.---But there is no occasion to describe him as we do an Highway-man that has robbed us, or the marks of a horse that is stolen from us; his looks, his words, his actions, all betray him.

(I) The uppermost Figure is a wretched form of man, which humanity can neither laugh at, nor describe. Over this I draw a veil.

*Quæ genus aut flexum variant, Heteroclita sunt,* says the  
Gram-



*Grammarians*; and such erratic and anomalous figures would very frequently present themselves to me; for as my engine was as correct as any of the like size and structure could well be, its variations could not be owing to that, but to the bodies weighed in it. Man is a very changeable animal, and does not long continue in the same character. I once found the perpendicular figure A in a tremulous motion for half a minute and one second before it came to its usual rest. But then I found the man was disconcerted for having said more than Yes or No at a Mayor's feast the day before. *Mercury*, it seems, who loves mischief as his eyes, had infused something in his wine, which set his tongue a running.—It cou'd not surely be the wine itself!

(B) The *conatus* against absolute Gravity, would sometimes cease, and drop its head; weary of struggling against the grain. To roll a stone up hill is infinite labour.

(C) The next figure amazed me. Twice it fluttered up to comparative Levity, came down to its first direction, mounted again; and in this fluctuating manner continued for a time. Suspecting some unfairness in the subjects of my experiment, I examined their pockets, and upon one I found *W-----d's* Journals, and a taking Sermon of *R-----ne's*; upon another, a small common-place-book filled with extracts from *Blount*, *Toland*, *Collins*, *Mandeville*, *Morgan*, and others. The *Methodist* keeps in his proper rank, whilst he is plotting the circulation of the hat for collections. The *Free-thinker* keeps his, whilst he is patching up his motley piece, *undique collatis membris*; but these labours over, enthusiasm catches up the one, and impudence the other, and whirl them both for a time into the Coxcomb's apartment.

There is one straggling and irregular figure more which deserves notice, though it is so mixed and complicated in its motions, as to come under no one certain Predicament; and this attends upon wit or good sense, as the *Jackall* does upon the  
*Lion,*



*Lion*, to catch up what the other may chance to let fall ; (for whatever previous use this animal may be of to his master in taking his prey, all Naturalists agree he partakes with him, or at least picks the bones after him) which opens to us a common character that is all void and waste, without any inclosure or property of its own, but by gleaning in other men's corn-fields carries a tolerable sample to market: Such men have just understanding enough to know what is good sense, cunning enough to steal it where they can, and sometimes memory enough to retain it; but oftener drop some, like shop-lifters in the night, or scramblers at a fire, who scour off with half their booty. If a man of rather absolute Gravity happens to be the thief, a little will serve his turn, as his consumption is but small; for, if he takes out with him four sensible sayings, he will generally have one *led* one, or one to spare. Suppose he makes a visit of four hours; he may fairly pass off one in enquiries after the family, &c. as how does your Lâship do? Has Miss Fidget recovered her fright upon her Chloe's jumping out at the dressing-room window? The weather is variable, but my Barometer says we are entering into fine, and that never goes wrong, &c. Thus one at an hour's distance afterwards, as we take some sorts of Physick, will complete the visit: but if upon an extraordinary occasion he wastes his whole stock, he knows when his clock is down, and marches off. If a man of rather partial Gravity goes to the Horizontal, as boys at school, for sense, he must either steal largely, as his volubility demands more, or he must dilute it, as some cooks spoil broth, to make it go the farther: But if at any time he forgets a part of what he heard, or blunders, or makes it nonsense in relating it, depend upon it, he will be ingenuous enough to tell the name of his author. When his stock is exhausted, he will some way or other get to the Horizontal again, and rub himself, as Naturalists say a wounded *Pike* does against the



the balsamic fides of the *Tench*, and thence fetch out fresh matter. Such men may be always known by here and there a *purpureus pannus*; for as it will not assimilate with their own coarse dress, it stands rather as a *Badge* to shew they take alms, and are beholden to other people for what they have.

I was encouraged in this undertaking, by observing the hasty and rash conclusions of mere *Physiognomists*, who have set down certain marks of ignominy as inseparable from the make and shape of some faces. Thus the *round* face is called *unthinking*; the *long lean* face *plotting* and *uncandid*; the *square*, *impudent*; whereas I have known, and am at this time acquainted with men of these different shapes of face, who are *sensible*, *open*, *candid* and *modest*. The *os rotundum*, *fibulatorium*, *quadratum*, *transversum*; the *labium densum*, *elevatum*, and *depressum*; the *nasus longus*, *brevis*, and *Batavus-caninus*, the *Gypsies* have made wicked work with, but their Prognosticks are as false as scandalous.

To rescue men from such slanderous reflections, was the primary design of this essay; but I have the pleasure to see many other advantages springing from it, some of which I shall enumerate; and could I look into futurity, I doubt not but many more would present themselves before me.-----Such a machine fixed up in every Market-town, as Steel-yards to weigh hay, will prevent great impositions upon the publick; for, if the solid contents of every man's head can be thus come at, every one will know how far he may trust to the understanding of his neighbour.-----If the fondness of parents will submit to this experiment of their children's capacities, it will infallibly direct them to a proper choice of their several callings and employments; and they will no longer be governed by the partial inducements of mechanical reading and an audible, or as it is generally called a *laudable* voice; because the former is often-



times no more ingenuity than the pratings of a Parrot are understanding ; nor the latter more harmony than the dissonant clanging of the marrow-bone and cleaver is musick.-----The same machine will be useful to weigh the parts of men going into any publick employment, before they have made their first blunder, which oftentimes, like an error in the first concoction, never is got over afterwards ; for, if we know upon certain principles they are not fools, we have nothing to do, but to hang them for rogues if they act wrong.-----It will save the difficult, as well as disagreeable task of shaking off an intimacy we have once contracted ; for I believe there is not a man living, who has not in some instances wished himself quit of some of his acquaintance, though few have courage to do it : And for this reason I have often pitied those Gentlemen, who remove to any distance from their proper settlements, because it must take a great deal of time before they can be fitted with suitable companions. But if my scheme takes place, a man has nothing to do but to send to the office at the next Market-town for a copy of the understandings of men of equal rank with himself. So likewise, when any stranger fixes in a town or neighbourhood, the people of the place, by making the same enquiry, may know whether it is worth their while to visit him.-----Such an establishment therefore will preserve great order and decorum in all places ; for, when men are conscious to themselves that their abilities may be known at so easy a rate, they will endeavour to conceal their weaknesses as far as they are able.

But, after all, I am afraid men will not readily come into this scheme, because something may be lost, as well as won by the experiment ; and until a court of understanding, like a court of conscience, be established by authority, obliging all people of a certain age and upwards to be weighed in this ballance, it will never come into general use. However, till such a law be made,



which is much to be wished, I shall put about a subscription with printed propofals (the subscribers names to be printed) for erecting fuch machines in different parts of *London*, and all Market-towns; and if any one fhould be unexpectedly snapt up as he faunters along the ftreets, let him take it for his pains; he might have been more privately weighed if he would. For the fame reafon, if any difcrediting circumftances fhould attend his elevation, why had not he the proper Habiliments on? For inftance, if he be fufpended by the tongue of his fhoe-buckle, be his parts what they will, he muft fall into abfolute Gravity; if by his watch-chain or breeches-buckle, neither of which is in the ballancing center, he muft fall into relative or partial Gravity; and if by the *ferrum humanæ Frontis*, into the line of ftark Fool.---As this fufpention will be very fudden, and I don't know a more ridiculous figure than a man with his hat and wig off in a publick ftreet, I recommend it to every one to ftraiten his hat-band, and make it to go very tight and clofe to the head; if it fhould caufe a red circle upon the forehead, be it remembered, that the *Crispini rubra corona* was no fmall honor in ancient times; tho' now *ecce iterum Crispinus* would affront many a modern Gentleman.—When I fay *all* people, I mean only thofe of the mafculine gender; for as the female fex cannot be weighed with decency, fo really there is no occafion for it: A peculiar delicacy of fentiment, and eafe of expreffion, fhew that their underftandings generally play between wit and good-fenfe; and the few “fair defects of nature,” from an eager propenfity to fpeak their minds, will difcover themfelves.

I know of no juft exception to my propofal as to the utility of the thing itfelf; but the world in general is fo unwilling to admit, and, indeed, fo feldom fees a pure act of publick fpirit, I expect fome by-ends will be imputed to me. It will be faid I am bribed by the Inventors of the artificial Load-ftone; or I am a white, or



black-smith; or I have a convenient loft to hang my Engine out at; one or other of these selfish motives will certainly be objected to me; but I protest not one of them hits my case; my sole views are, to take men out of the false scales of conjecture, and weigh them in the ballance of equity and truth: And I have invented this, because I do not know any other engine, (if it wou'd answer the purpose) but what rather degrades a human being: For, if we take him into a butcher's scale, it is weighing him after beasts; if to a chandler's, it is after the putrified fragments of one; and if to a hay-engine, it is after their provender. Hemp-dressers, Rope-makers, &c. &c. every one cannot bear the smell of.—Others will say, I clip the wings of fancy by bringing things too near to demonstration; but in my opinion, fancy is nothing without a little truth for its foundation: For, what are ruffles without the substantiality of a holland sleeve, or the froth of a whip-syllabub without wine at the bottom? Others, that I hurt the general topics of modern conversation; and I hope in time I shall; but reformatations are not to be made all at once; and therefore I shall accommodate myself to the reigning humour for the present, and give men leave, instead of calling Blockheads, Coxcombs, Fools, &c. to say, I know such a man's weight, or I guess such a man's weight, or I wish I knew such a man's weight, &c. This indulgence will filter the sauce, with which most characters are served up, from the coarser lees of asperity, but at the same time leave sufficient poignancy behind.

When I speak thus familiarly of weight, the reader I hope remembers, I do not mean either *Troy*, or *Avoirdupoise*; for that Brobdignag *Bright* of *Malden* might weigh no more than the *Norfolk dwarf* upon my principles; for, I mean by weight, only so much *intellectual Gravity*, as determines a man's position in one or other of the lines already laid down; and therefore, if any one likes it better, he may say, I know such a man's point, or I guess such  
a man's



a man's point, or I wish I knew such a man's point. Over-timorous people will start perhaps at this expression, as it is one of the technical terms of sporting; but, to ease their fears, I do assure them no qualification is necessary, and that no one has been taken up for a poacher for making use of any of them in common conversation.

Before I make my *exit* a word or two to the Critics may not be improper; for, I hope I shall have some, it being a bad omen when all the rats forsake a ship. The nodding shrugging Critic, as who should say, I wonder what some folks mean! I answer with a nod and a shrug, as who should say, I neither wonder at, nor regard what some folks think. The whispering Critic, who intimates I might spend my time better, I answer with this question, Does he spend his time so well? His very whisper betrays he does not. The gloomy Critic I defy, with all his Inquisitorial tortures, to rack out a confession of Prophaneness, Immorality, or Indecorum. The loud-talking Critic, who roars out his notion of a man's trifling in such a manner, I ask, How he spends his vacant hours? Are *studying* Magazines, drowsing in an elbow chair, lolling at a window, or knotting of fringe, more significant amusements? But these men are Bush-fighters, and aim rather at your legs than your head, to mangle, not kill. The true writing Critic enters the lists boldly, and cries out, There is neither fancy, spirit, nor language in this performance. I plead guilty and kiss the rod; For why should the Court be troubled with his long circumstantial evidence to convict me? To the common questions of the Ordinary of *Newgate*, as "How entered it my head to write? What instigated me, &c." I shall only say, it was not breaking the Sabbath, and keeping lewd women company; "I left no calling for this idle trade." My eyes fail me for closer applications, and I amuse myself in this way because it requires neither. Doing nothing, or doing  
nothing



nothing to the purpose, is indeed generally said to be the same thing; but with respect to the mind of man, which loves employment, there is surely a great difference.—The Emperor that killed flies would have been miserable upon the lazy *Sofa* of an Eastern Monarch; for, that diversion of his, which has always been ascribed to his love of cruelty, I can scarce think was any thing more than his love of action; for the little agonies of an expiring fly would not gratify the ordinary spleen of an ill-natured man.

And now, my gentle Reader, I unwillingly take leave (I wish you cou'd say the same) and I beg of you never to ask me, nor so much as guess at the names of the persons I have already weighed; for it is a secret that shall never be divulged: And the more effectually to prevent a discovery, I have never plucked two feathers from the same bird, I have never painted two features of the same face; nothing personal is intended, and therefore *qui capit, ille facit*.

T H E E N D.